Redevelopment Planning

Description

Working with a variety of community members, local planners and elected officials is an effective way to identify and integrate long-term community needs into the reuse plans for the site. Redevelopment planning enables citizens to realize their vision for the future reuse of the site. This process should encourage participation of all community members in goal development, action planning, and implementation. By considering a community's vision of future land uses for Superfund sites, EPA often can tailor cleanup options to accommodate community goals.

Required Activity?

No.

Making it Work

When to Use

While successful redevelopment planning can occur at any stage of a cleanup, redevelopment planning should begin as early as possible in the remedial process. The planning process can last several days or months depending on the issues facing the community. It is vital to help communities think of long-term strategies for future land use. EPA should begin the process in the earliest stages, most likely as a set of questions during the ***Community Interviews.*** Reasonably anticipated future uses should be included as part of the Scoping Phase of the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS).

See Community Interviews, Tab 5

How to Use

Redevelopment planning should begin when interviews with key community stakeholders occur, including:

- Interested citizens and community advocates;
- Officials such as mayors, city/town managers or planners, and selectmen; and
- Representatives from local economic or community development corporations, zoning boards, etc.

Community involvement and partnerships are the keys to successful redevelopment planning. Through early involvement of those who must implement the vision, a Community Involvement Coordinator (CIC) and RPM can motivate citizens to work actively towards the future reuse they desire, while demonstrating EPA's willingness to work with the community. One way EPA helps communities develop partnerships for reuse is by supporting the formation of ***Community Advisory Groups*** (CAGs). CAGs are committees made up of citizens with diverse community interests that provide a public forum for discussing community concerns about Superfund sites - including how the community wants to reuse a site. In addition, many Superfund sites present communities with issues that require expertise in chemistry, engineering, geology, toxicology, law and redevelopment planning. Through the ***Technical Assistant Grant*** (TAG) program, EPA makes it possible for communities to hire additional expertise they need. The steps for successful redevelopment planning are:

See Community Groups, Tab 4

See Technical Assistance for Communities, Tab 41

- Document existing conditions-look at the full range of physical and social features.
- Analyze the site-look for possible patterns, relationships and linkages within the site and with the surrounding area.

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- Develop alternative concepts-might include industrial, residential, or recreational uses. Assess the benefits and consequences of alternatives.
- Preferred plan-seek out a broad range of interests within the local community to arrive at this. Develop strategies for reuse that meet the objectives and reduce risk.
- Implementation-insure risk management while incorporating reuse activities.

Tips

- Keep an open mind and be creative.
- Involve stakeholders early and often.
- Communicate openly with the community.
- Manage stakeholder expectations of what redevelopment may occur.
- Learn from others who have been involved in successful redevelopment planning.

Related Tools/Resources in the Toolkit

- Community Groups, Tab 4
- Community Visioning, Tab 9
- Facilitation/Conflict Resolution, Tab 14
- Technical Assistance for Communities, Tab 41

Outside Sources of Information

- *Reusing Superfund Sites.*EPA brochure on how communities are turning toxic wastelands into productive assets: *www.epa.gov/superfund/programs/recycle/pdfs/reusingsites.pdf*
- *The Tex Tin Corporation Superfund Site Ready for Reuse (RFR) Determination,* July 2003 (additional guidance on RFR will be forthcoming)
- *Reuse Assessments: A Tool To Implement The Superfund Land Use Directive*. OSWER Directive 9355.7-06P

Internet Sources of Information

- Superfund Redevelopment website: *www.epa.gov/superfund/programs/recycle/index.htm*
- EPA's Land Revitalization website: *www.epa.gov/oswer/landrevitalization*

Attached Items in this Tool

- Attachment 1: Success Stories Where Communities Actively Participated in the Redevelopment Planning Process

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Eastland Woolen Mill Site, Corinna, Maine

When the Eastland Woolen Mill closed in 1996, the Town of Corinna, Maine, faced with a significant loss of jobs and no one to address the contamination threats from the site that had seeped into soil and the Sebasticook River, sought assistance from EPA and the State of Maine to address the contamination left behind by the Mill and to start planning the revitalization of downtown Corinna once the clean up was complete. The site was placed on the NPL in 1999.

Proposed relocation and reconstruction of Main Street as part of the remedy sparked tremendous local interest in redevelopment planning at the site. Revitalization planning was guided by the Corinna New Beginning Committee, comprised of Corinna citizens, business representatives, and town officials, and EPA issued a Redevelopment Initiative Grant to the community. Corinna's residents and groups such as the Sebasticook Committee for a Clean Environment (SCCE) have played a very active role in the rehabilitation of the town. SCCE meets monthly to discuss the site's progress and develops communication strategies to ensure the residents of Corinna are kept informed.

To date, the town has seen the removal of the entire former Eastland Woolen Mill, the relocation of Main Street, the restoration of the East Branch of the Sebasticook River, and the removal of 115,000 tons of contaminated soils. Every step of the way, EPA, the State of Maine, the Town of Corinna, and local stakeholders have worked together to accomplish a cleanup that optimizes the reuse potential for the site. The town has a whole new perspective on the future and a solid foundation for redevelopment. One resident stated, "We have a clean sheet of paper to start planning a new village center...this is the chance of a lifetime to make Corinna from scratch."

Avtex Fibers Site, Front Royal, Virginia

For more than 45 years, the 430-acre Avtex Fibers plant manufactured rayon, polyester, and polypropylene fibers for commercial, defense, and space industries until operations ceased in 1989. In June 1986, the site was listed on the National Priorities List. The contamination discovered at the Avtex Fibers site was of such magnitude and complexity that the area has been the subject of a number of removal, enforcement, and long-term cleanup actions.

To ensure that the site is cleaned up and redeveloped in a manner consistent with local needs, EPA, the State of Virginia, the local Economic Development Authority (EDA), and the site owner sponsored a multi-stakeholders group (MSG) to facilitate public participation and input. The MSG provides an interactive forum where a broad group of interested parties can consider site-related issues critical to the future of the area. MSG members include local officials, community members, environmental and business group representatives, and municipal planners. To facilitate MSG operations, EPA selected the site as one of ten original pilot sites to receive grant funds under the Superfund Redevelopment Initiative. Multiple stakeholders have been actively engaged in developing the reuse plan and in contributing resources. Through the MSG, participants developed a redevelopment plan that divides the site into three areas: a 240-acre river conservancy park along the riverfront, a 25-acre active recreation park, and a 165-acre eco-business park.